

# The gulf war research papers example

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

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1. [International Conflict Political Science](#) \n \t
2. [The gulf war begins](#) \n \t
3. [The aftermath of gulf war](#) \n \t
4. [The diversionary theory](#) \n \t
5. [Balance of power theory](#) \n \t
6. [Reference](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

## **International Conflict Political Science**

### Introduction

There have been a number of issues in the world that has brought about international conflicts for years. It is a fact that every year there are new conflicts that emerge and the old conflicts become worse or improve. There are many countries where people know that no matter what happens conflicts with other countries will continue to persist (Jack & William, 2007). Examples of these countries are Afghanistan, Syria, Israel, Palestine, Nigeria, Sudan, Iraq and Democratic Republic of Congo. Most of the wars have begin as civil wars and ended up being a full blown war between states. In this research paper, the interstate war to be looked at will be the Gulf War that occurred in 1990 to 1991. In this war, many states made a coalition to fight against Iraq, which also had support from a few states. There are two theories that can be used to explain the reason why it began and the events

that took place during the war. These two theories are diversion theory and the balance of power theory.

The Gulf War is also known as the Persian Gulf War. The Gulf War happened in 1990 to 1991, in which many states combined to fight one nation (Summers, 1995). Initially it was a civil war between Iraq and Kuwait. In 1990, the Iraq leader called Saddam Hussein claimed that the Kuwait was refusing to share the oil that was located in the border. Before the invasion, the president of Egypt Hosni Mubarak called for the two leaders from Iraq and Kuwait to negotiate and take care of their problems. This was so that other nations that were from outside the gulf region would not intervene. However before the negotiations could take place Iraqi president called off the negotiations meeting. This is when he called for the invasion of Kuwait in August 2, 1990 (Swaidan & Nica, 2002, p. 2).

There were many claims that came out about the reasons why Iraq was invading Kuwait such as the Iraq government was refusing to pay their debt that they owed the Kuwait government. The other major reasons for the war were that the Iraq leader wanted to expand their leadership to Kuwait and also wanted to control the largest oil reserves in the region of Kuwait. The day that the invasion began the United Nations asked the Iraq government to withdraw their troops from Kuwait. When the Iraq government refused to do it, the United Nations called for other nations to ban trade with Iraq. This in return caused the Iraq government to take full control of Kuwait by sending more troops. Most of the Arab countries condemned this action by the Iraqi government. This is why they formed the Operation Desert Shield, which had a combination of military forces from different Arab countries in

order to fight against Iraq troops in Kuwait (Simpson, 2003).

The other leaders from countries such as United States, Soviet Union and Britain condemned the invasion of Kuwait. This invasion began to threaten Saudi Arabia, which is considered to be one of the top or largest producers and exporters of oil who worked together with Kuwait. Saudi Arabia together with some people from Kuwait who had defected asked for help from the western countries. Some air forces from the United States as well as troops sent by other Arab countries were sent to Saudi Arabia just in case Iraq decided to try to invade it. Iraq however continued to send more troops of about 300, 000 to Kuwait and declared it a 19th province of Iraq (Wright, 2007). Saddam Hussein who wanted to garner support from other Muslim nation declared the invasion as a holy war or Jihad.

In November 29 1990, the United Nations approved the usage of forces against Iraq if they did not remove their soldiers from Kuwait. An allied coalition from different states combined their forces, which reached over 700, 000 troops that were to fight against Iraq in 1991. This however did not stop Iraq instead; he maintained his stance that Kuwait was A province of Iraq. Iraq however also had the support of some other countries such as Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen and Algeria.

### **The gulf war begins**

On January 17 1991, the United States began hitting the Iraq troops on air. This air campaign continued throughout the war. The air fight was named as the Operation Desert Storm, which was able to destroy the air defenses as well as the communications network of Iraq. The air attack progressed in that they began attacking the Iraqis forward ground forces that were located

in Iraq and Kuwait. In these attacks, they were able to destroy the tanks used by the Iraqis in the war. The main objective for the air attacks was so that the combat attacks on the ground could be minimized. The ground attacks from the allied forces against Iraq, the process was called the Operation Desert Sabre (Simpson, 2003). This operation occurred in mid February 1991. The operation began when the allied troops headed from the northeastern Saudi Arabia entered Kuwait while others were located in the southern Iraq. These troops were able to defeat the Iraq troops.

The other allied troops from the United States entered west of Kuwait and attacked the Iraqi forces located there. By 27 February, most of the elite republic guards from Iraq were able to be defeated. Kuwait was able to be freed from the Iraq troops or government. The resistance from Iraq was collapsing thus causing some of the Iraqi troops to ceasefire and returned to their countries. This caused the president of United States George Bush to declare ceasefire and declared that the Gulf War had ended in February 28 1991. Saddam Hussein had to accept to a peace terms with Kuwait. In the peace term, they were supposed to accept that Kuwait was sovereignty in that Iraq had to remove all the weapons they had put in Kuwait. The Iraqi sides were the ones who lost the war to Kuwait.

### **The aftermath of gulf war**

After the Gulf War, there were a number of casualties from both parties. The Iraqi troops were the ones who were killed more than the coalition against Iraq. It has been estimated that the number of casualties from Iraq are about 8, 000 to 10, 000 people. The casualties from other states are believed to be more than 300. There have been numerous reports of illnesses that occurred

after the war by the people involved. In the war, there were a number of chemicals that the troops were exposed to during the war. Examples of these chemicals are anthrax vaccines, chemical weapons and depleted uranium. The wide spread of illnesses is what led to the formation of the gulf war syndrome after the war. There were some women who began to have problems of giving birth while some children were born with birth defects. The syndrome became well known after it was publicized by a USAF officer called as Major Michael Donnelly (Waldman, 2005, p. 179).

After the war, Iraq experienced widespread malnutrition and poverty. This was due to the fact that the UN had made sanctions in that no one was to do business with them. This sanction was made when Iraq president refused to remove his troops from Kuwait. In the sanctions, they were also denied help of medical supplies. It has been reported during the time of the sanctions there have been many people who have died especially people from the Central and South Iraq (Yetiv, 2004). Later on during the 1990s, the UN began to relax their sanctions, this was because of the way the people of Iraq were suffering for things they did not do. As a last result before the Iraq troops left Kuwait they started oil fires, which burnt for ten months before it, was finally distinguished. The oil fire because of the time it took for it to be distinguished led to the widespread of pollution in Kuwait. The cost for the war especially for the United States was very high in that it was estimated by the congress that about 61. 1 billion dollars was spent. The Iraq government also spent a lot of money during the war and ended up losing the fight.

## **The diversionary theory**

In looking at the war in the world, many researchers have found out that the main reasons for it is due to the combination of factors such as ethnic diversity, domestic turmoil and population diversity (Levy, 1989). In the Gulf War, one can be able to see that all these factors played a part in the cause of the war. In looking at the gulf war, it is very clear that the diversion theory was used. This is because in diversion theory the political elites usually distract people by resorting to war so that people will not be able to see their internal problems or real intention this therefore, shows that in the diversion theory hypothesis it uses the scapegoat situations. In this case, the Iraq was distracting their own debt that they owed to Kuwait by resulting to war.

In the war, Iraq stated many reasons as to why the war was taking place or tried to justify why they were trying to invade Kuwait. In the diversion theory, it involves war of convenience for a particular country in this case Iraq (Miller, 2008). The fact that Iraq was trying to take Kuwait by force by making it one of its province. This caused other nations to swoop in such as Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia was afraid that since Iraq had already tried to take Kuwait they would also try to occupy Saudi Arabia. This caused them to ask for help from the international community. This became a war of convenience for them because by other nations fighting Iraq this will make Iraq occupied with the war and would forget all about Saudi Arabia. It is a common fact that Kuwait has a lot of oil in the country that has many people very interested with the country. This is also another reason that caused Iraq to invade Kuwait so that it can be able to take control of the areas that has oil in Kuwait (Jack & William, 2007).

## **Balance of power theory**

The balance of power theory can be used in explaining about the gulf war. The balance of power in the Persian Gulf has been stated to be inadequate especially in its strategy. This is why it has made vulnerable for outside powers to enter and make changes (Miller, 2004). Before the gulf war, began Iraq threatened to take Kuwait and make it a province of Iraq. The other states from the Arab nations such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia tried to make Iraq and Kuwait to have talks in order to come to a conclusion that would not lead to war. The main purpose for this action was so that the foreign nations would not be able to interfere with their problems (Miller, 2004). However, Iraqis leader Saddam Hussein changed his mind two hours before the meeting was to take place. This caused Saudi Arabia to ask for help from the United States and other super powers. This caused there to be a change in the power of balance in the region.

The fact of the matter is due to the regional transformation of the balance of power is what caused the end of the Gulf War and made Iraq fall thereby retreating their troops from Kuwait. The involvement of the super power United States in the war is what caused the fall of Iraq. This is because due to the involvement of United States led to the coalition of many states against the invasion of Iraq. This showed how powerful United States is in the Persian Gulf in that they were able to conjure more states from the Arab region to join in the fight. In the 1980s, during the war between Iran and Iraq where Iraq was able, to get a large support from the major powers in the world made them powerful in the region. The power they had is what made them have the guts to try to invade Kuwait in order for them not to pay for



their debt. After the war, ended most are states started beginning to depend on the United States for security (Tammen, 2000).

The most suitable theory to be used in the Gulf War is the diversion theory. This is because the diversion theory explains the real reasons why the war took place (Miller, 2008). The fact of the matter is Iraq were invading Kuwait in order for them to not pay the debt they owed to Kuwait and they also wanted to take control of the country especially the areas where there was oil. They diverged there reasons from these facts and stated that the Kuwait as well Saudi Arabia had gone against an agreement they had made about the oil business. Later on Saddam Hussein, the Iraq president tried to woo the other Islamic states by claiming that Kuwait invasion was holy war. The major weakness for this theory in explaining about the war is that it does not show how the other nations took part in the fight. This is because it does not show how the balance of power played a major role in the war (Yetiv, 2004). This is because after the war between Iraq and Iran that took place in the 1980s, boosted the confidence of Iraq because they felt that, they were more superior to his neighbors. This made them feel that they could conquer Kuwait invading them.

If you have selected an older conflict, discuss whether or not conflict between the two parties recurred after the end of the conflict that you studied in your paper. Why did conflict recur? If conflict did not recur, why didn't it? In what ways was the future occurrence/non-occurrence of conflict shaped by the conflict that you studied?

The conflict between Iraq and Kuwait did not continue due to so many reasons. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, the United Nations banned all aids from

going to Iraq (Wright, 2007). This caused the nation to suffer especially since the medical supplies and food did not enter Iraq. It was reported that many people died from lack of getting these things. The suffering of the people made Saddam Hussein concentrate on how to help them rather than starting war with Kuwait again. The economy of Iraq was already having troubles before the war. This is because he did not have enough money for him to repay his debt to the other Arab nations. The reason for the economy in Iraq to not be good is because of the war it had with Iran. On the other hand, Kuwait was flourishing with the oil business in the region thus threatening Saddam Hussein's oil business.

After the war when the sanctions were made in that, no one was allowed to do business with Iraq. This made the economy to worsen in that the country became poor. The war caused Iraq to spend a lot of money, which was worth billions of dollars. Kuwait also suffered loss from the war especially in cleaning up the oil spills, which took up to eight months to clean. This also affected the environment severely by polluting it. After the gulf war there were strict guidelines inspections that were made in order to check the weapons programs made by Saddam Hussein's government. This caused Hussein to have constant clashes with America over compliance with the program. This is because the guidelines were formulated in order to prevent Iraq starting another war with Kuwait or any other nation. These guidelines made it possible for another war not to occur.

After the war, the United States showed their superiority thus become very powerful in the gulf region. This is why they including the coalition force that fought against Iraq were able to make sanctions about the no fly zone. The

main reason for the no fly zone rule was because of the tension that was in the northern Iraq between the Kurds and the Shia (Simpson, 2003). This made Saddam Hussein angry and claimed that the restriction was an illegal act. The United Nations also thought that this act was violating the rights of Iraq. These caused Saddam Hussein to fight back by attacking some of the planes that were in the no fly zone, which belonged to the United States. The constant attacks between the planes that were in the no fly zone between United States and Iraq is what caused the Iraqi leader not to concentrate on fighting with Kuwait. The no fly zone also made it possible for the United States to know if Iraq was planning an attack in Kuwait and thus would have been able to stop the attack before it could ever occur. The non-occurrence of the war has been shaped by the conflict or the gulf war. This is by looking at the damages it did to the environment, the economy and the diseases that came after the war. These effects caused the deaths and suffering of innocent people in different countries in the gulf region but most especially in Kuwait and Iraq. These effects and the interference from the powerful countries who formulated sanctions that have made it impossible for the two countries to have time to start conflicts.

In conclusion, the gulf war began as a civil war between Kuwait and Iraq. The main cause of the war as stated by Iraqi leader was that Kuwait were interfering with their oil business (Summers, 1995). Later reports came out that the main purpose of the war was so that Iraq would not be able to pay their debt as well as they wanted to expand their region in that they claimed that Kuwait was the 19th province of Iraq. Before the war began, the Arab nations tried to make Kuwait and Iraq have talks in order to prevent the

international community to be involved. This however did not go according to plan because Saddam Hussein Iraqi leader bolted the last minute and sent troops to Kuwait. The international community got involved especially after Saudi Arabia asked them for help. In the gulf war, the Iraqi troops were defeated and caused the deaths of over 10, 000 people. The two theories of war that can be used in this research paper are the balance of power theory and the diversion theory. In both theories, they are able to explain the events that occurred before the war as well as during and after the war.

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